

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

MARVELOUS FLORIZEL REUTER.

A Little Boy Who Has Musical Talent and Whose General Knowledge Is Wonderful.

A pair of dimpled baby hands grasping a violin bow, a rosy cheek pressed against an instrument many times too large for him, a soul full of music—this was the picture that attracted Max Bendix to the wonderful little boy, Florizel Reuter. He needs no higher inducement in the musical world than the fact that Max Bendix has taken him in charge and predicts for him a brilliant future.

Florizel Reuter is a boy 4½ years old, yellow haired, blue eyed, with a sunny face full of intelligence and as handsome



FLORIZEL REUTER.

as was ever prince in fairy tale. He is physically perfect, and mentally nothing short of marvelous. He is able to recall events in history with as much ease as other children of his age would nursery stories. He is a veritable walking encyclopedia.

If this be only the possession of a wonderful memory the marvel is no less.

He sings in childish treble Scotch ballads, of which he is familiar with many, and recites from "Macbeth," "Hamlet" and "Julius Caesar."

He was taken last spring to hear Ysaie play. He listened with profound interest until the conclusion of the first part of the concert, when he threw himself back in his seat, and with a look of distress, said to his mamma: "I am discouraged. I can't play like that."

He is of a most devout nature, never tasting food until a blessing is asked upon it, and never lying down without first repeating the Lord's Prayer, which he often follows by an original one, frequently in rhyme of his composing just at the time.

Florizel has only heard one opera, "Siegfried," but is familiar with the libretto of a number. He reads them with perfect ease, and can repeat the entire part of the memory of any of them that he has read.

He has a novel way of entertaining himself. He will take his violin and surround himself in imagination with the old masters, for whom he will play. So real is their presence that he will beg his mamma not to sit on certain chairs, as she would sit down on Wagner, Schumann, Schubert, etc. Again he will make up his audience from the characters of some favorite opera, oftentimes taking the part of some hero or heroine himself.

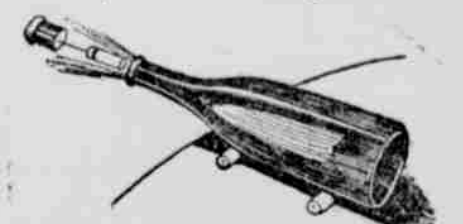
A fair idea of the precocity of the child can be gained from the fact that recently during a visit at the residence of Lyman J. Gage in the presence of a number he was questioned on points in anatomy, history, geography, zoology and the various sciences. The examination lasted a considerable time, the questions and answers were taken down by a stenographer, and it was found that the child hadn't made a single error in his replies.—Chicago Times-Herald.

A Bottle Cannon.

Take a thick empty bottle—a champagne quart bottle will do—and pour water into it until it is one-third full. In the water dissolve one of the powders—bicarbonate of soda, that druggists sell to make sellers water.

Put the contents of the other package, tartaric acid, in a playing card rolled up into a tube and tied around with a thread, one end of the tube being sealed or plugged with two pellets of blotting paper.

Suspend this miniature cartridge from the cork by means of a piece of thread attached by a tin tack. The open end of the



cartridge must be uppermost, and when all is ready you cork the bottle tightly, having allowed enough thread to swing the cartridge clear of the water.

To explode the cartridge and discharge your novel cannon you lay the bottle horizontally upon two pencils on the table. They will act as your gun carriage.

Pretty soon the water will penetrate the blotting paper plugs and reach the tartaric acid. Effervescence will at once take place, and the carbonic acid gas thus generated will throw the cork from the bottle with a loud report, the cartridge trailing after it like a rocket.

And you will have a still further imitation of field artillery in the recoil of the bottle, which will roll back several inches. Make this little experiment. It is both pretty and harmless.—Philadelphia Times.

Easily Decided.

"Mother," said Johnnie after deep thought, "suppose I should knock this vase off the table and catch it. Then I wouldn't catch it, would I?"

"N-no, I suppose not," his mother slowly assented.

"But," continued Johnnie, still toying with the vase, "if I should knock it off and not catch it, then I would catch it, wouldn't I?"

"Yes, you would," his mother grimly returned, this time with quick decision.

A Mistake.

A bright little 4-year-old boy was lying in the grass and looking into the sky when he espied the moon. He was astonished to see it in the daytime. Suddenly jumping up, he rushed into the house and cried, "Oh, mamma, God forgot to take his moon in last night."—Exchange.

A Little Boy's Vain Regret.

He was six years old, just six that day. And he held in his hand a broken toy. He looked in his face for an instant, and then he said, with a sigh and a downward eye, "If I could live my life over again, I think I could be a better boy."

—Edith M. Thomas in St. Nicholas.

CAUGHT IN THE ACT.

FRENCH OFFICIALS NABBED THE DANGEROUS SMUGGLER.

A Man Has a Right to His Favorite Brand of Smoking Tobacco, but He Must Keep It Out of France—A Narrow Escape From a Heavy Fine.

The career of a criminal is always interesting, especially if the criminal is himself. Then a person, knowing all the circumstances of the case, can trace the career of the wrongdoer from the first false step until the final catastrophe, when he is laid by the heels. If a man enters into a career of crime, he is reasonably sure to be caught at last, and the particulars of how, after deluding the customs officials of France for years and years, I was at last trapped and, curiously enough, when I was innocent. I am a little mixed as to what the moral should be.

For years and years I have deluded the French customs officials in the matter of tobacco. I think, of course, that it is wrong to smuggle as a general rule, but I cannot imagine it wrong to bring into an unenlightened country like France tobacco that a white man can smoke. I always calculate the number of days I shall be in any part of France, and then I take a two ounce package for each day and a couple extra in case I should meet a friend famishing for a good smoke, and this quantity I have never had any difficulty in smuggling into the great European republic. As the tobacco is entirely for my own consumption, and as I am not a citizen of France, and as I shall be swindled enough by the hotel keepers in whatever part I chance to be, I ease my conscience by putting out these facts to it, and I must say that my conscience, being a reasonable one, does not judge me harshly in the matter. It is needless perhaps to add that the French government does not agree with me in all this; so, therefore, in order not to trouble the government more than is necessary, I place these packages about my person in such a way that on passing the French frontier I give the government as little bother as possible.

The other day I was on my way to Switzerland. I expected to be able to register my trunk clear through to Bern, and although I knew tobacco was cheap and good in Switzerland I thought I would take the precaution of putting a few packages of my own particular brand at the top of the trunk. It was a foolish thing to do, knowing that I had to pass through France, and when I got to the railway station in London and found I could only register the trunk as far as Paris I should then have taken the tobacco out if I had thought about it. We arrived in Paris a little after 6 o'clock in the evening, and the train left for Bern from a station on the other side of the city at 8:30, so there was just time enough to get a comfortable dinner and cab it across Paris from one station to the other, but it allowed no great margin for customs examination.

When the villain who acts for the French government asked me if I had anything to declare, I said I didn't, exactly knowing I had some tobacco, but it was not intended for use in France. I was going to take the night train to Bern if I could get the luggage across Paris in time. I opened the trunk and showed him the packages of tobacco. He shook his head, and gathering the packages in his hands he departed, leaving me there with the open trunk. He returned after awhile with a man who was evidently a higher official, and behind the higher official came another of the same rank as the first.

"Why didn't you declare this tobacco?" said the official to me.

"I did declare it," I answered. "I told him I was going through to Switzerland with it and none of it was to be opened in France."

The official said nothing, but the two understrappers attacked the box and turned out every mortal thing that was in it. I don't carry much luggage when I travel alone, but this trunk contained the various articles of wearing apparel that belonged to my family. It had been packed with much care, and the heap it made on the bench where they examined luggage in Paris was something appalling. It didn't seem to me possible that any human being could ever get all these things back in the trunk again. They found no more tobacco, but they all retired to an office and seemed to consult about the matter. Then the main official came out and said that this was a case for the chief inspector.

"Very well, then, get the chief inspector here as quickly as possible."

"But he has gone for the night," said the official.

"Do you mean to tell me," I said, "that you are going to make me miss my train for Bern all on account of a few packages of tobacco? Keep them, for heaven's sake, and presenting them with my compliments to the inspector tomorrow, but let me pass through Paris and catch my train."

He shook his head, and the two understrappers began putting the things better sheltered back in the trunk, and finding they could not squeeze down the lid again they took the trunk and the rest of my baggage and locked it up for the night. I learned that the inspector would not be there until 10 o'clock in the morning, and that would make me miss the morning train for Switzerland also. I again offered the pompous official the tobacco, but he said that it was not a question of the tobacco at all, but of a fine. I should be probably fined 2,000 francs, he added. A man who had concealed two boxes of cigars, a Cuban, had that week been fined 2,000 francs, and probably my fate would be the same as his. It all would depend on the inspector.

"But," I urged, "I did not conceal the tobacco at all. I told the man it was there before the trunk was opened."

The official shook his head.

"You did not declare it," he said.

There was nothing for it, then, but to go to a hotel, which we did. I consulted the hotel proprietor, who advised me to curb my naturally ugly temper and to be exceedingly deferential in the morning. He said that if the inspector chose to put a 2,000 franc fine upon me I should have to pay it or leave my baggage there forever.

In the morning I was taken before a very dignified official, who scrutinized me with some severity. He listened to what I had to say, and, luckily for me, the first inspector did not tell any lies about it, but admitted that I had said I had tobacco and had said that I was going through to Switzerland and mentioned that the tobacco was not concealed, but lay on the top of the trunk. The official then asked me to show my ticket to Switzerland, which I did. He finally came to a decision, and he said I should pay for a man to go across Paris with me and see my trunk registered through to Bern, and that I should pay 10 francs duty on the tobacco, and that I should remember I was getting off very early.—Detroit Free Press.

A CHERRY TREE STORY.

Not an Old Man Blanks It at the Start With a Watch Yarn.

"You observe this plain gold ring on my little finger," said the man from Chicago, turning the finger of his left hand to brass but on a screw. "It has my wife's full name engraved in the inside. Well, it is our engagement and wedding ring. My wife lost it one day when we lived near San Francisco, and though we searched high and low we couldn't find it. One day, nearly two years later, a friend of ours insisted on presenting me with a small cherry tree."

"If I take a cigar this time, please," remarked the man from Old City.

"I said cherry tree," continued the man from Chicago. "And I'm giving you a true story. Well, this offer of my friend was declined at first, but my wife insisted, saying that we could set it out in a particular place in the lawn. She marked the spot and I sent for the little tree. I dug down about 14 inches where she designated, and lo! there it was, just as it was. How it got there we never could guess."

"There's nothing improbable about that," said the Old City man, "unless it is the cherry tree. But did I ever tell you the story of my watch? This same watch?"

"—pulling out a gold hunter. "Several years ago I was drilling a well up in the Bradford district and had got down about 1,200 feet, without any sign of luck. I was looking at the hole, under the derrick with something like despair one day—for we had stopped work on it. Pulling out my watch, which I carried without fastening it, suddenly slipped from my fingers and down she went, chuck into that dry hole. The idea of adding that to my loss riled me, so I got a cylindrical tube such as we get tools of sand with and put some putty near the open end and let it down the hole, which it fitted neatly. My watch came up with the suction, stuck fast to the putty. It hadn't stopped running."

"Yes, and you know we renewed work on that hole the next day and got first sand in six hours."

"I hadn't finished about my ring," put in the Chicago man. "We had moved to Iowa, and my wife lost it again. I offered \$100 reward for it, but no use. We came to Chicago and seven years after I had left the Iowa place I received the ring through the mail from the man who had sold out to me. He said he was pulling cabbage in the garden and found it solidly grown on the root of a cabbage."

We began to move away before the Old City man could recover.—New York Herald.

Hadn't Earned the Reward.

A fat man carrying a gun and holding a dog made a dash down Market Street for the Oakland ferryboat. He could have caught it if he had walked straight ahead, but he became excited, and old Time commenced having fun with him. The dog would run on the wrong side of telegraph poles and hydrants, and tangle up his chain in the legs of pedestrians. By the time spent in apologizing and untangling the dog he was delayed till the little gate closed in his face. Then he ran around to the big gate, dashed around a mail wagon, and made a run for the boat. The deck hands raised the apron and the boat went slowly out, but he was determined to catch it, and gripping his gun and dog, he made a dash for the boat. He was only six feet away, but the dog leaped at the apron. The hunter stopped in the middle of his leap, his feet flew out toward the steamer, and he dropped into the bay like a bale of hay. A small boy who was fishing from the wharf dropped his pole, splashed into the water, and towed the fat man to a pile, where he clung till a boatman pulled him out.

"My boy, you saved my life," he exclaimed enthusiastically, as he kissed the dog and tried to wring the water out of his shotgun. "Let me reward you."

He reached into his hand into his chimney pocket and fished out a wet 10 cent piece. "There, my boy, take that, but don't spend it foolishly."

"No, sir, I can't take it, sir." The boy pushed the generous hand aside. "I didn't earn it."

"Why, you saved my life, boy."

"Yes, I know it, sir, but it ain't worth 10 cents!"—San Francisco Post.

"Uncle Billy's" Political Record.

In every county of Kentucky you will find a lot of old men who take great pride in telling you that for 40 or maybe 50 years they have never voted anything but the Democratic ticket. They began perhaps with Jackson and have come on down the line. An old man of the sort, who was called Uncle Billy and who was very close fisted, one day saw a group of voters about Governor Proctor Knott. Uncle Billy, leaning on his tall staff, edged his way in and asked to be introduced. He was formally presented "as the oldest voter in the county." "Yes, governor," said Uncle Billy, with evident pride, "I certainly am the oldest voter in the county. If any man will teach a man as has thrown more Democrat votes than I have, I'll furnish the liquor." Hereupon several of the crowd, knowing Uncle Billy's stinginess, but eager for any chance to come into a treat, picked up their ears, and Uncle Billy, noticing this and becoming alarmed at the probable outlay if he should be proved wrong, hemmed and hawed and added, "That is, I'll furnish the liquor to any man as fetches the man."

"Fun on the Stump," by Edward J. McDermott, in Century.

She Mourned.

To those who can tell an Irish story well, with all its rich brogue and rolling r's, this is suggested as a good one.

Mrs. S. was much interested at one time in a poor widow whom she had employed, who found great difficulty in getting a living. After a while, however, the widow married a man with some money and in a fair business and Mrs. S. rejoiced over her fortunate prospects. A few weeks later, however, she met the former widow dressed in the deepest of mourning. Shocked and sympathetic, Mrs. S. said, "Mary, I hope you have not met with any loss."

"Sure, Mrs. S.," replied Mary, "when my poor Tim died, I was that poor that I couldn't put on the bit of mourning for him, and I said that when I could I would, and so I am."

The new husband must have been a curmudgeon if he had objected to this.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Just Waiting.

An old lady, far advanced in years, was walking one day through a churchyard, when she stopped before three mounds that formed, as it were, three sides of a square. The graves were those of the late doctor and parson of the parish and of an old East Indian, noted whist players to their day. "There they are," she remarked placidly after a pause, "the old rubber, just waiting for me to cut in!"—San Francisco Argonaut.

I THANK THEE.

For the earth and all its beauty,
For the blue and smiling shadows
That rest the dazed sight,
For smiling fields and prairies,
Where silence in vain has tried,
For the world's exhaustless beauty,
I thank thee, O my God!

For an eye of inward seeing,
A soul to know and love,
For these common aspirations,
That our high hearts strive,
For the hearts that live as each other
Beneath the sun, the soil,
For the amaranth saved from Eden,
I thank thee, O my God!

For these two great gifts of being,
I thank thee, O my God!

—Lucy Larcom.

HOW THEY DIFFER.

Man a Creature of Habit; Woman a Creature of Mood.

Anything that is habit is man. Man is a creature of habit, and his habits are his masters. He is a creature of habit, and his habits are his masters. He is a creature of habit, and his habits are his masters.

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THE ARMENIANS.

A Gifted People Who Have Played a Considerable Part in History.

The Armenians are a civilized people, a people of great natural gifts, and a people who have played a considerable part in history. Since their ancient monarchy, which had suffered severely in the long and devastating wars between the Roman and Persian empires from the third to the seventh century of our era, was finally destroyed by the Seljukian Turks, a large part of the people has been forced to migrate from its ancient seats in the headwaters of the Euphrates, Tigris and Aras. Some of them went westward to the mountain fastnesses of Cilicia, where another Armenian kingdom grew up in the twelfth century. Others drifted into Persia. Others moved northward and now form a large, industrious and prosperous population in Russian Transcaucasia, where many have entered the military or civil service of the czar and now, as the Armenians used to do long ago, in the Byzantine empire, in posts of distinction and power. These three best generals in the last Asiatic campaign against the Turks were Armenians.

Others again have scattered themselves over the coast of Asia Minor and south-eastern Europe where much of the local trade is in their hands. But a large number, roughly estimated at from 1,300,000 to 1,700,000, remain in the old fatherland round the great lake of Van and on the plateau and elevated valleys which stretch westward from Mount Ararat to Ezeroun and Erzeroum. Here they are an agricultural and, to a less extent, a pastoral population, leading a simple, primitive life and desiring nothing more than to be permitted to lead it in peace and in fidelity to that ancient church, which has been to them the symbol of nationality as well as the guide of life for centuries.—Hou. James Bryce, M. P., in Century.

French-English.

Perhaps the following may amuse your readers: Some years ago at Cannes, in passing the usual shop of a tailor I read this notice: "Jackets executed with single-breasted and double-breasted suits."

London Spectator.

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